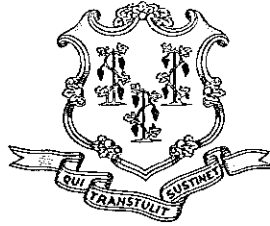


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Good morning Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrera and members of the Transportation Committee. I would like to express my support for two bills on the agenda today: S.B. 697, AN ACT REQUIRING THE SUSPENSION OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENSE OF A MINOR WHO PURCHASES OR ATTEMPTS TO PURCHASE ALCOHOL, and S.B. 698 AN ACT EXPANDING THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH A SPECIAL MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S PERMIT MAY BE ISSUED.

We all understand that consumption of alcohol by minors creates a myriad of problems not the least of which is driving under the influence. SB 697 would enhance the penalty for youth who attempt to purchase alcohol such that the penalty would include a suspension of the person's drivers license. This measure would deter youth from attempting to purchase alcohol because facing

a suspended license would speak to youth in a way that a fine (which might be paid by a parent) cannot. Similar legislation in other states has been shown to reduce the rate of driving under the influence by minors as well. Certainly this bill would not end the scourge of young people abusing alcohol, but it would represent a sensible step along that path.

SB 698 would also create a sensible change to our statutes. Currently, Connecticut has a highly restrictive law in regard to Special Motor Vehicle Operator's Permits (work permits) for those who have been convicted of Driving Under the Influence. Under the current law this permit can only be used to drive to and from work. I believe that the permit should be expanded to allow for trips to school and medical appointments. There must be consequences for driving under the influence, but the consequence should not include preventing a person from scheduling needed medical appointments. For students, school is essentially the equivalent of work and so allowing trips to school would also be a pragmatic change.

Thank you for considering these important bills.